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ArkivDigital Visits RootsTech 2016

The world's largest genealogy and family history meeting

BY KATHY MEADE

For the fourth year in a row, Arkiv Digital, a company that provides online access to Swedish historical records, has been an exhibitor at the RootsTech conference in Salt Lake City.

RootsTech has become the largest genealogy and family history conference held in the world. RootsTech 2016 (February 3-6) held in Salt Lake City, Utah, was bigger than ever. There were over 25,000 registered attendees from all 50 U.S. states and 40 countries, 260 exhibitors, and over 250 interesting and informative lectures.

This year's RootsTech again featured an event on the first day called the "Innovator Summit." Developers, entrepreneurs, and innovators from around the world gathered to explore and discover business and technological opportunities within the family history market. Innovators were invited to compete with their latest hardware and software apps

and services for cash and in-kind prizes. This year's winner was the company *TapGenes*, an app that helps families create an accurate and complete family medical history together. *Link on page 30.*

There were over 250 lectures, and workshops attendees could choose topics on how to get started with your family history, ethnic research, technology, DNA, and many other subjects. Several sessions were streamed live so that people around the world could view them without having to attend the conference. Some of the 2016 presentations are available for viewing in the RootsTech video archive. *Link on page 30.*

The exhibit hall was huge this year with over 260 exhibitors. The exhibitors ranged from the "big players" such as Ancestry, FamilySearch, MyHeritage, and Findmypast, to start-ups and one-person operations. Among the many vendors were companies specializing in photo res-

toration, genetic testing, storytelling, book publishing, and scanning operations as well as book vendors.

ArkivDigital is pleased that Kathy Meade has been selected for the last two years to be one of the program presenters at RootsTech. This year she gave a presentation to a packed room titled "Discover your Swedish Roots in color using ArkivDigital." Many of the attendees expressed their excitement about the future searchable name register for the 1880-1920 household records which will make the search process so much easier.

Again, ArkivDigital had a booth in the exhibit hall with three workstations and there was a steady stream of visitors every day asking questions about ArkivDigital and how to use the service, how to find the place where their Swedish ancestor came from in Sweden, look-ups in the 1950 Swedish census, requests for reading assistance in reading



From left: Kathy Meade, Chicago, Don Hubbard, Chicago, and Lorna Nelson, Lindsborg, KS.

records, and many other Swedish genealogy and research questions. We always seem to get at least one person stopping by who has confused Sweden with Switzerland and we have to explain the difference between the two countries.

But we were especially moved when a woman stopped by our booth and put her arms around the monitor and said, "Oh, I love ArkivDigital. You gave me my family!"

Several wellknown bloggers blog about RootsTech, including Randy J. Seaver, Jana Last, and many more. *See some links on page 30.*

How is FamilySearch affiliated with RootsTech?

FamilySearch hosts RootsTech as a community-driven conference that is supported by both technology and genealogy sponsors. All speakers are selected by independent committees.



A person with Swedish roots, and Kathy Meade.

RootsTech is independent of the FamilySearch affiliate program.

Next RootsTech?

If you would like to experience one of the leading genealogy events of the year, mark February 8 -11, 2017,

on your calendar now. It will once again be held in the Salt Palace in Salt Lake City. The cost of attending the whole event (3 days) was \$249 in 2016.

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It is huge! Inside the Salt Palace in Salt Lake City, Utah.